(c) what is the reaction of Government with regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASDNDHRA RAJE): (a) Yes Sir. There were media reports that, in order to dissuade Pakistan from conducting nuclear tests, US would after military and economic assistance to Pakistan currently restricted under the domestic laws namely, the Pressler Amendment. A draft bill to repeal the Pressler Amendment was introduced in the US Senate.

(b) and (c) Docs not arise. Pakistan has since conducted nuclear tests. The draft bill has been withdrawn. US has announced sanctions against Pakistan additional to those contained in Pressler Amendment.

Entry into seas and air space

1737. SHRIMATI VEENA VERMA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether as reported in the States man of February 11, 1998, USA has challenged the alleged "excessive claim" of India and 20 other countries about entry into the seas and air space; and

(b) if so, what precise claim about entry into the seas and air space have been made by India and what is the response of the US and other world powers thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS SHRIMATI VASUNDHRA RAJE): (a) and (b) The news item in the Statesman of February 11, 1998 refers to the Annual Report of the US Department of Defence to the US President and Congress. At Appendix-1 captioned "Freedom of Navigation", the Report states that for 18 years the US Freedom of Navigation Programme has ensured that "excessive coastal State claims" going beyond the limits permitted under the UN Law of the Sea Convention (UNCLOS), over the world's oceans and air space arc repeatedly challenged by the United States by diplomatic protests and "operational assertions". In the financial year 1997 (Oct'96-Scpt'97), the US targeted 21 countries, including India, where it carried out such "operational assertions". In the case of India, the alleged excessive claim relates to the requirement of "prior permission for warship to enter the territorial sea".

Under Section 4 of the Indian Maritime Zones Act, 1976, the entry/ passage of foreign warships and submarines through the territorial waters of India may take place after giving prior notice to the Government of India. The requirement of prior notice in case of warships is fully in consonance with the relevant provisions of UNCLOS relating to the definition of innocent passage as also the right of coastal States to enact laws and regulations with regard to the entry of warships. The requirement of prior notice neither denies nor impairs the right of innocent passage of warships through the territorial waters of India.

Functioning of Indian Council of World Affairs

1738. SHRI NILOTPAL BASU: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to ' state:

(a) whether the Government are aware of the distinguished role played by the Indian Council of World Affairs in pro-viding input to foreign policy making in the country;

(b) if so, if the Government are also aware of the present pitiable condition of the organisation in terms of absence of democratic functioning, norms for the employees' service condition and emoluments, condition of the library, etc.; and

(c) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken to correct the situation?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI VASUNDHARA RAJE): (a) to (c) The Indian Council of World Affairs was founded in 1943 as a non-official, non-political, and non-profit organisation devoted to the study and research of foreign policy and international affairs. Under the auspices of the Council, the first Asian Relations Conference was held in New Delhi in March 1947. In April 1997, the Council organised the Asia-Pacific Conference in new Delhi to mark the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the Asian Relations Conference. The Council continues to be engaged in organising events linked to foreign policy and international affairs.

From time to time Government have received complaints about the unsatisfactory functioning of the Council. Government has been urging the President of ICWA to take steps for constituting a high-powered supervisory/advisory committee with a view to reviewing the whole gamut of the functioning of the Council and to suggest improvements to be brought about. The President of the Council, however, has not taken any concrete steps in this regard.

The Indian Council of World Affairs is an autonomous body registered with the Registrar of Societies under the Societies Registration Act, 1860. As such, Government have no direct or indirect administrative control over the functioning of the Council. The Ministry of External Affairs has not given any financial assistance to the Council since 1985.

Export of processed foods and fruits

1739. SHRI PARAG CHALIHA: SHRI GOVINDRAM MIRI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the details of steps, if any, taken by Government during the last five years to boost export of processed foods and fruits etc. from India; and

(b) what has been the achievement level in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI SOMPAL): (a) The Government is providing financial assistance to exporters, growers, cooperatives societies and food processing units for development of infrastructure facilities such as purchase of specialised transport units, establishment of prc-cooling/storage facilities, integrated post-harvest handling systems and setting up/cxpansion/modcrnisation of food processing units. The Government is also arranging promotional campaigns such as buyer-seller meets and participation in important International Fairs and Exhibitions. Special efforts are being made to improve processing facilities and to implement Hazard Analysis Critical Control Points (HACCP) to meet the quality standards imposed by the European Union and USA. Government also assists in development of data base and dissemination of information.

(b) As per statement.

Statement

Achievement in the export of processed food products

(Quantity in thousand metric tonnes. Value in Rs. crores)

Product		1994-95		1995-96		1996-97	
		unntity	Value	Quantity	Value	Quantity	Value
PROCESSED FRUITS & VEGETABLE. (mango Pulp, Chutneys etc.)	Picles and Products)	144.32	348.21	193.50	491.59	175.25	473.77
ANIMAL PRODUCTS (Meat, Poultry and Diary		164.10	448.38	183.89	682.58	185.92	803.59